Review of telephone tariffs

*156. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether mobile telephone tariffs and other telephone charges have been revised and reduced;

(b) if so, to what extent;

(c) the details of the original and revised tariffs; and

(d) the circumstances and rationale for the revision?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Telecom Regulary Authority of India (TRAI) revised, *vide* their Notification dated 24th January 2007, the existing tariffs for roaming services, the changes becoming effective from 15th February, 2007. The original and revised ceiling charges prescribed by TRAI, together with the extent of reduction/revision effected, are as follows:—

Sl. No.	Particulars	Pre-revised Value	Revised Value	Extent of Reduction
1.	Monthly Rental	Rs. 100	NIL	100%
2.	Per minute outgoing LOCAL call	Rs. 3.00	Rs. 1.40	53%
3.	Per minute outgoing NLD call	Rs. 3.00	Rs. 2.40	20%
4.	Per minute incoming call	Rs. 300	Rs. 1.75	42%
5.	PSTN Charge	Interconnection Usage Charge as applicable	NIL	100%
6.	Surcharge	15% on roaming airtime charge	NIL	100%
7.	Incoming SMS Charges	Forbearance	NIL	As Applicable
8.	Other matters related to Roaming	Forbearance	Forbearance	No change

(d) The major factor necessitating a review of roaming tariff by TRAI was the lack of effective competition in the roaming segment of the market that resulted in higher charges as compared to the cost of providing roaming services.

PoWs languishing in Pakistani jails

*157. SHRI HARISH RAWAT:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any formal proposal from Pakistan as a follow up of recent offer by the President of that country regarding the search of Indian PoWs languishing in Pakistani jails;

(b) if not, whether Government have followed it up with Government of Pakistan;

(c) if so, whether Government have formulated the modalities;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor and by when the modalities are likely to be finalised?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) During his visit to Parkistan in January, 2007, the External Affairs Minister reiterated India's request for a visit by the families of the missing defence personnel to jails in Pakistan. President Musharraf agreed to accept a delegation of families of PoWs. Government have proposed the visit of a delegation to Pakistan in April, 2007.

Indian passports in circulation

*158. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian passports in circulation in the country;